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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8671
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 8104
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 3792
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 7016
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1998
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 1480
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC
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RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 8651
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: JAMMU AND KASHMIR: PAKISTAN-BASED TERRORISM THREAT
CASTS SHADOW ON SEPARATIST TALKS WITH GOI

REF: A. NEW DELHI 2355
[1](#)B. NEW DELHI 2208
[1](#)C. NEW DELHI 2195
[1](#)D. NEW DELHI 2155
[1](#)E. NEW DELHI 2135

Classified By: Political Counselor Uzra Zeya, Reasons 1.5 (B,D)

[1](#)1. (C) The improving security situation and the return to relative peace and prosperity in the state has encouraged the Indian government to be forward leaning on seeking a solution to the Kashmir issue through confidence building measures and the start of a dialogue with separatists (refs a-d). On the Delhi-Srinagar dialogue, the hurdles the GOI and Mirwaiz Omar Farooq, Chairman of the separatist All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), face in reaching an agreement are formidable (Refs a-d). They must secure the blessings of all factions of the APHC, including hardliner Syed Ali Shah Geelani, as well as other important separatist leaders like Yasin Malik who are not part of the APHC. They must get the nod of Kashmir's mainstream political parties, which have played by GOI rules and will not want to be undermined by any agreement that the GOI reaches with the separatists. They must also bring along Islamabad, which has obvious equities and with which India is currently not discussing any issue but terrorism.

[1](#)2. (C) Despite these enormous difficulties, there is some glimmer of hope that given time the Mirwaiz may get a deal with India that is acceptable to Islamabad, to mainstream political parties within Kashmir, and even to Syed Ali Shah Geelani and his hard-line separatist ilk within Kashmir. But what remains a bridge too far at this point is that the Mirwaiz and his faction will be able to reach a deal that is acceptable to Kashmir-focused terrorist groups such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JM), and Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) in Pakistan, or receive guarantees from India and Pakistan of protection from assassination by these groups. The Hindu journalist Praveen Swami, who is close to India's security and intelligence agencies, told Poloff that discussion of safety is the principal separatist concern in their talks with the GOI at this time. Most of the separatist leaders have been personally touched closely by

LT/JM/HM assassinations in the past -- the Mirwaiz and the Lone brothers lost their fathers to terrorist assassins -- and it accounts for the nervousness shown by Bilal Lone and Abdul Ghani Bhat after the heavy media attention around the GOI-separatist talks in recent days (ref a).

13. (C) The LT/JM/HM and other Islamist groups will not formally or informally settle for anything that falls short of complete secession. India has shown over the last two decades that it is willing to pay any price to prevent the valley from seceding. This stalemate could be broken if either Delhi or Islamabad could guarantee the safety of separatists who cut a deal with India from LT/JM/HM terrorists. Delhi clearly is in no position to offer such a guarantee. That the GOI and the separatists are talking is a positive development in all respects. However, we should not expect the Mirwaiz and his colleagues to reach any breakthrough deal with India until they feel secure against the LT/JM/HM assassination threat.

WHITE